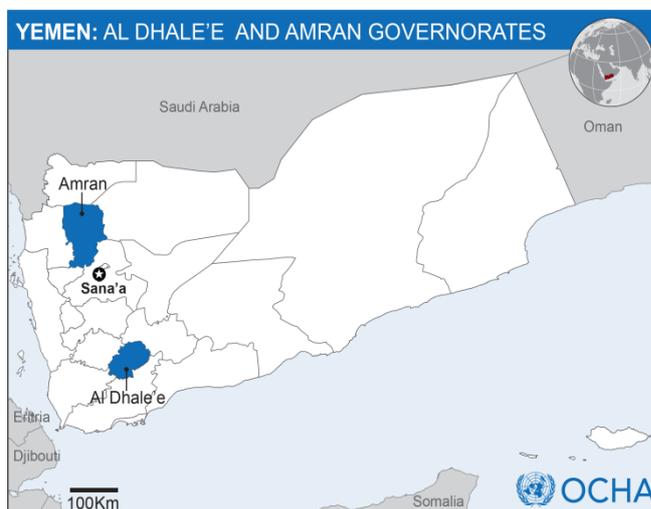




This report is produced by OCHA Yemen in collaboration with humanitarian partners. It covers the period from 16 -27 February 2014.

Highlights

- Since January, 20 villages (some 45,000 residents) in Al Dhale'e Governorate, have been shelled or violently attacked. Civilian deaths are reported, including women and children.
- Humanitarian access is limited in Al Dhale'e. The Government and the UN reached agreement to field an inter-agency assessment mission to Al Dhale'e city within a short time.
- In Amran Governorate, tension is again high, with parties to the conflict reportedly re-arming in Amran city and Raydah town.
- 28,610 displaced people have registered for assistance in Amran. Over 14,767 internally displaced people have been verified and assisted.
- Six cases of Gender Based Violence (GBV) were reported in February in Al Dhale'e, and four in Amran.



Source: OCHA Yemen
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

600,000

Total population in conflict-affected areas of Amran*

72,000

Estimated number of people displaced in Amran Governorate**

440,000

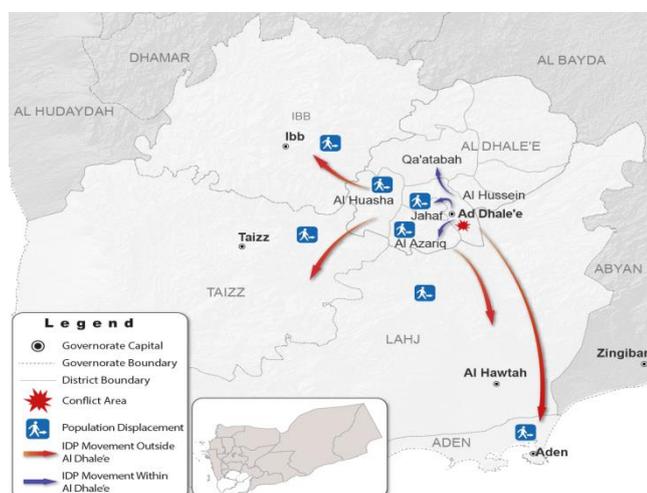
Total population in conflict-affected areas of Al Dhale'e***

8,000

Estimated number of displaced people in/from Al Dhale'e Governorate****

* Out of a total population of 949,185. Included districts are: Amran, Raydah, Khamir, Al Ashah, Al Qaflah, Kharif, Huth, Harf Sufyan, Jabal Iyal Yazid and Bani Suraim. ** Includes some 44,000 people displaced prior to 2011, and some 28,610 displaced people registered since October 2013. The actual displacement is expected to be higher as tribal traditions prevent some people from registering. *** Out of a total population of 631,975. Included are areas of conflict: Al Dhale'e, Al Husha, Jahaf, Al Azariq, Al Hussein and Qa'atabah districts. ****The fluidity of the displacement and lack of access is hindering identification of newly internally displaced people. Some 3,150 people/450 households of internally displaced people within Al Dhale'e have been verified. Another 4900 people/700 households are reported displaced to neighbouring governorates. Source: iMAPP population project 2013, based on data from the Central Statistical Office.

Situation Overview



Source: OCHA Yemen
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Al Dhale'e Governorate

The security situation in Al Dhale'e remained tense following fighting between Hiraq Taqrer Al-Masir (HATM) and government forces, which broke out in mid-December 2013. The fighting caused markets, shops, health facilities, schools, government offices and other businesses to close in the city of Al Dhale'e (population of 26,000). Properties and farms are reportedly being looted by armed elements while checkpoints have hindered free movement of goods and people, affecting access to basic services, food and protection. The conflict has caused civilian deaths, including women and children, but the exact number of people killed remains unknown.

Since January, more than 20 villages (population of 45,000 people) have been frequently shelled or attacked violently. An attack on Al Wabh in Al Dhale'e District

reportedly depopulated the village, with its 1,000 residents fleeing to safety in neighbouring communities. Some 3,400 people have sought shelter in the districts of Jahaf, Al Azariq, Al Hussein, and Qa'atabah and within Al Dhale'e city. More people are reportedly arriving in the neighbouring governorates of Aden, Lahj, Taizz and Ibb. Those who are displaced within Al Dhale'e Governorate are believed to be staying with relatives or host communities. People who have left to other governorates, such as Aden and Lahj, are reportedly renting accommodation or staying with relatives. So far assistance to the conflict-affected population within Al Dhale'e has been minimal as the response continues to be hampered by indiscriminate violence and limited access.

On 26 February, teams from local non-governmental organizations in Al Dhale'e started rapid needs assessments in Jahaf District, the cities of Al Azariq and Al Dhale'e city and surrounding villages. These areas are reportedly severely affected by the conflict. Preliminary feedback highlights that displaced people and host communities need food assistance, access to health facilities and clean water. Overcrowded houses and lack of income have placed extra pressure on already vulnerable households. A Multi-Cluster Rapid Assessment (MIRA) type undertaken in September 2013, before the on-going conflict broke out, indicated that most families in Al Dhale'e depend on salary from government employment.

Insecurity limited humanitarian access throughout the reporting period. On 26 February, the acting Humanitarian Coordinator and representatives from WHO, UNICEF, UNDSS and OCHA met a government delegation from the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Interior and the Human Rights Ministry to discuss humanitarian access to Al Dhale'e. An agreement for an inter-agency assessment team to access the governorate within a short time was reached. The mission will be accompanied by a representative of the Human Rights Ministry and possibly by line ministries in the life-saving sectors. Humanitarian partners in Aden are ready with trained assessment teams and plans for a multi-sectoral response plan have been developed.

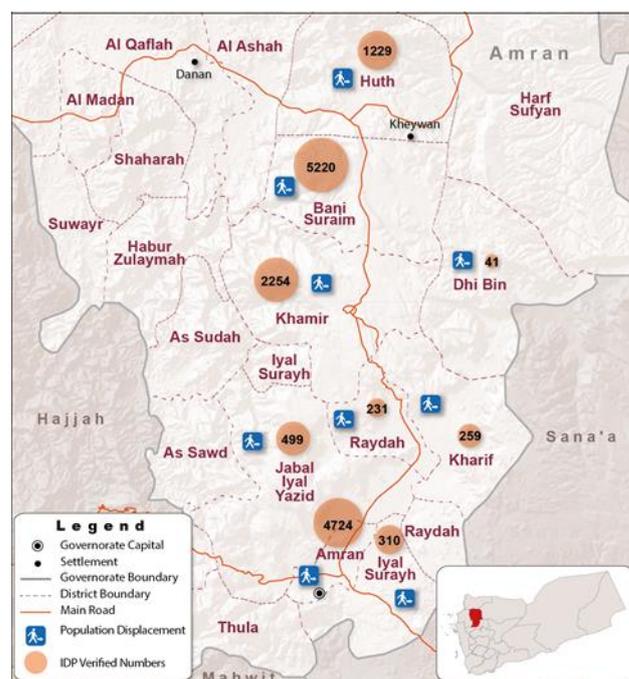
Amran Governorate

In Amran Governorate, a truce was reached on 6 February between Al Houthis and local tribesmen, but the truce has remained shaky. Recently, the parties to the conflict have reportedly been bringing more armed men and weaponry into Amran city and Raydah district, and tensions are rising. Reports indicate that the President deployed a new mediation team to Amran to ease the tensions on 21 February. However, the outcome of the mediation process has not been confirmed.

An estimated 70,000 people are displaced by conflict in Amran, including some 20,000 - 30,000 since clashes erupted in October 2013. By 18 February, 14,767 newly displaced people had been verified and provided with some form of assistance. Another 13,843 displaced people have registered with the Executive Unit for support. Verification of displaced people continues, including outside Amran city and in Huth, Bani Suraim, Khamir, Raydah, Kharif, Jabal Iyal Yazid and Iyal Surayh Districts.

The highest number of displaced people has reportedly arrived in Amran city; but the highest number of verified displaced people is in Bani Suraim. The relatively low number of registrations in Amran city can be a reflection of the displacement pattern, – with IDPs in large cities living with relatives. Tracking of displacement and providing assistance in such urban areas is a major challenge.

The Executive Unit reports that 5,824 people (832 households) from Amran Governorate have arrived in the capital, Sana'a. Protection cluster partners are verifying this information. By 16 February, 3,934 people (564 households) displaced from Amran to Sana'a had received some form of assistance – 'one-off' food rations and some basic household items.



Locations of confirmed displacement. Source: UNHCR Yemen, 24 February 2014. Map source: OCHA Yemen. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Funding

Humanitarian agencies have the capacity to respond to the immediate needs of the people affected by the recent conflict. Additional funding requirements will be addressed through the ERF, as needs arise.

Humanitarian Response

On 25-26 February, an inter-agency/inter-cluster assessment team visited Al Qaflah, Al Ashah, Harf Sufyan and Huth Districts in northern Amran. Preliminary feedback from the team indicates that displaced people are returning to the area but the pace of return is slow because many are concerned that conflict may flare-up again. There are great needs within the health sector, with facilities either short of medicines or damaged, and lacking skilled staff. The health situation was poor before the recent conflict, now it is worse. Many schools are not operational, with some damaged, but the greatest challenge is displacement of children and teachers. Some schools are occupied by armed groups. The full assessment report is expected to be finalised by first week of March. Subject to access, cluster partners and lead-agencies are ready to address identified needs.

The findings from an assessment undertaken by Protection Cluster partners on 6 to 9 February were released this week. Through focus group discussion, 180 recently displaced people from Al Ashah, Al Qaflah and Huth Districts expressed their most urgent needs as food, cooking equipment, children and women clothing, access to education for children and access to general health care. Partners are coordinating efforts to address identified needs in Amran.

The security situation in many parts of Al Dhale'e and Amran governorates remains tense. Humanitarian partners are preparing to expand assistance to people in areas presently out of reach.

With limited access to conflict-affected locations and people, obtaining information on humanitarian needs is a challenge across all clusters. Minimum information of needs, also negatively affects response planning and knowledge of gaps and constraints. It is hoped that ongoing and planned inter-agency assessment will improve this situation shortly.

Education

Needs:

- Access to education for displaced children in Amran.
- Education facilities for 1,430 learners at the school in Sanah (Al Dhale'e governorate) recently destroyed by shelling.

Response:

- In order to ensure learning opportunities for conflict affected children, the cluster has provided tents, whiteboards, floor mats and other education material to secure temporary learning space for some 1,430 conflict-affected children from the village of Sanah and surrounding communities in Al Dhale'e Governorate

Food Security

Needs:

- Food support to some 28,610 people recently displaced within Amran governorate.

Response:

- Partners in the Food Security and Agriculture Cluster are providing 'one-off' food assistance to verified newly displaced people in Amran. On 26 February, food distribution to 12,950 people (1,850 households) started.
- Some 100,000 people (15,200 households) out of 134,000 people (19,138 households) displaced in previous conflicts (2010 – 2011) in Amran received their general food support within the reporting period.

Gaps and Constraints:

- Insecurity hinders food distributions outside Amran city, forcing displaced people to travel long distances to Amran to collect their rations. Distance to distribution points is of concern particularly for vulnerable households, such as those headed by women, elderly or young adults.

**Needs:**

- Referral of critical patients from Al Naser hospital in Al Dhale'e city to more advanced health care facilities.
- Medical supplies to health facilities in the conflict-affected areas of Al Dhale'e.

Response:

- The cluster supports transport of referral cases from the Al Naser hospital in Al Dhale'e city to a private hospital in Aden.
- The Al-Salam hospital, Zobaid and Hussain health units in Al Dhale'e received dressing kits (surgical gloves, scalpels, gauze and elastic bandages, body and eye sterile compresses and blankets) and essential drugs.

**Needs:**

- During conflict, the cluster expects that malnourished cases (MAM/SAM) appear after one month. For both Amran and Al Dhale'e governorates, displacement has been going on for longer than one month.
- Reopen the Outpatients Therapeutic Care Programme (OTP) in Al Dhale'e District serving 4,500 pregnant women and 20,757 children under 5 has been closed on 20 December 2013 due to conflict.

**Needs:**

- Support to survivors of gender based violence in Al Dhale'e and Amran.
- Protection of the civilian population in conflict areas.
- Emergency shelter support to the displaced in Amran. In particular for the extremely vulnerable people such as women, children and elderly.
- Monitor grave violations towards children.
- Child friendly spaces for children affected by conflict.

Response:

- Verification of IDPs to establish needs among the displaced people in Amran continues.
- A community centre for displaced people in Amran operated by the Protection Cluster has provided counselling to some 211 people.
- A national cluster partner will provide rental support to some 345 extremely vulnerable displaced households in Amran city, 35 others in Gabal Yazid District, and 60 in Raydah District. The project is funded through the Emergency Response Fund.
- The Child Protection Sub-Cluster is continuing to monitor grave violations towards children in Al Dhale'e.
- Child Protection Sub-Cluster and Education Cluster partners are cooperating to provide after school Child Friendly Spaces (CFS) for the children at the temporary school in Sanah, Al Dhale'e Governorate. Some 1,500 children will benefit from recreational supplies and the supervision of 40 newly trained volunteers who will be working at the CFS.

Gaps and Constraints:

- Registration of displaced people in large town settings and those living with host communities is slow and challenging.

**Needs:**

- Many vulnerable displaced people in Amran are in need of assistance to pay house rent.

Response:

- Cluster members have provided blankets, cooking sets, sleeping mats, buckets, mattresses and plastic-sheeting to 9,615 (1,409 households) displaced people in Amran city.



Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH)

Needs:

- The hospital in Al Dhale'e lacks secure, stable and safe access to water.
- Conflict-affected people in Al Dhale'e lack access to safe water.
- 1,300 displaced families, including 5,000 children, in Amran lack access to safe water.

Response:

- WASH partners have distributed chlorine tablets to Local Water and Sanitation Cooperation (LWSCA) in Al Dhale'e and Al Hussein Districts (Al Dhale'e Governorate) for further distribution to some 150,000 conflict-affected people.
- WASH partners have distributed 1,300 hygiene kits (soap bars, washing powder, combs, and basins for washing clothes, towels, jerry cans and water jugs) to displaced people in Amran.

General Coordination

Al Dhale'e Governorate

Coordination of the ongoing operation in Al Dhale'e is supported by the OCHA sub-office in Aden, sub-regional clusters and cluster-lead agencies. Clusters are closely monitoring the situation and will continue to coordinate the verification of needs, numbers of affected people and response efforts.

Assessments

- The nutrition cluster conducted an assessment among displaced families from Al Dhale'e who moved to Aden and Lahj Governorates. The final assessment report is expected this week.
- Effort is underway in Ibb and Taizz to assess needs among displaced families from Al Dhale'e.

Amran Governorate

Coordination of the ongoing humanitarian operation in Amran is supported by the OCHA sub-office in Sa'ada and the country office in Sana'a, in close cooperation with sub-regional and national clusters, and cluster-lead agencies. To strengthen coordination of assessment and response, cluster lead agencies (UNHCR, WFP) and OCHA have bolstered their presence in Amran City. Agencies and partners are closely monitoring the situation and will continue to coordinate the verification of needs, numbers of affected people and response efforts.

On 19 February, local government partners and humanitarian actors met in Amran city to discuss the verification of displaced people for assistance. The slow verification process is reported to be of concern. It was suggested to increase the teams undertaking verification.

Background on the crisis

Al Dhale'e

In mid-December 2013, the Hirak Taqrer Al-Masir Movement (HATM, "Movement of Self-Determination for the South") attacked a military checkpoint at the entrance to Al Dhale'e city in Al Dhale'e Governorate. This incident sparked conflict between the Movement and Government forces. Fighting has since intensified. Reports have emerged of indiscriminate shelling in Al Dhale'e city, including shelling of civilian infrastructure such as health, education and water facilities. These attacks have reportedly led to displacement and civilian deaths, including women and children. Humanitarian partners are planning a multi-sector response and are ready to undertake a needs assessment when access becomes possible. The Humanitarian Country Team members have been trying to access Al Dhale'e both from the Sana'a and Aden to conduct an assessment of humanitarian needs. By 26 February, access had still not been granted due to security concerns.

Amran

An estimated 20,000 – 30,000 people have been displaced by conflict within Amran Governorate since October 2013. More than 20,000 people have reportedly reached Amran city, while thousands have sought shelter in other parts of the governorate. On 30 January, new rounds of clashes between the Hashid Tribes and Al-Houthi took place, causing a new wave of displacement. The renewed fighting led to secondary displacement of a large number of people displaced at the end of 2013. Dozens of people have been reported killed and others injured. On 6 February, a mediation team led by the Governor of Sana'a facilitated a truce between the fighting parties. Displacement of people within Amran Governorate has occurred several times over the last 10 years. While some people have returned to their areas of origin, many remain displaced and dependent on humanitarian assistance.

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An Arabic version of this report will be available in the coming days at: <http://yemen.humanitarianresponse.info/>